

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02

PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 /056 W

----- 115955

R 201639Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9165

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, VE

SUBJECT: VENEZUELAN REFUSAL TO AUTHORIZE CHARTER FLIGHTS

1. AIR TRANSPORT DIVISION OF DIRECTORATE OF CIVIL AERONAUTICS HAS REFUSED AUTHORIZATION FOR PAN AMERICAN TO FLY THREE CHARTERS DURING THIS MONTH. ONE WAS ON ROUTE CARACAS-SANTO DOMINGO AND TWO CARACAS-SAN JUAN. NO REASON WAS GIVEN. REFUSALS ARRIVED A DAY BEFORE RESPECTIVE FLIGHTS WERE TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE. ONLY ON LAST INSTANCE (CARACAS-SAN JUAN) DID PAN AM REQUEST EMBASSY INTERVENTION.
2. EMBOFF ATTEMPTED TO CALL CONTACT RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS IN OFFICE OF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION. ALL WERE ABSENT FROM OFFICE AND NOT AVAILABLE. PAN AM THEREFORE CANCELLED THE FLIGHT SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 18.
3. IN ORDER TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON THE REASONS, EMBOFF CALLED VIASA, WHOSE GENERAL MANAGER INFORMED THAT THE CHARTER HAD NOT BEEN OFFERED TO VIASA AND THAT THEREFORE IN HIS OPINION, THIS MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN ATTEMPT TOWARDS PROTECTIONISM BY THE DIRECTOR OF AIR TRANSPORT. WHEN ASKED WHETHER VIASA WOULD HAVE HAD THE CAPACITY, GENERAL MANAGER REPLIED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. EMBOFF TOLD GENERAL MANAGER THAT USG FEELS THAT THE SPIRIT OF FREE COMPETITION SHOULD

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BE UPHELD AND THAT THE MARKETING EFFORTS OF THE RESPECTIVE

AIRLINES SHOULD BE THE DECIDING FACTOR AND NOT GOV EFFORTS TO FORCE OUR AIRLINES TO REQUEST THEIR CUSTOMERS TO OFFER CHARTER LOADS FIRST TO THE NATIONAL FLAG CARRIER. VIASA'S GENERAL MANAGER AGREED BUT STATED THAT GOV AND VIASA ARE TWO DIFFERENT ENTITIES AND THAT HE PERSONALLY DOES NOT AGREE WITH A PROTECTIONIST POLICY, BUT THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT IT, IF THAT IS WHAT IT IS. VIASA MANAGER STATED HE REGRETS THE ABSENCE OF A FIRM POLICY OR OF A BILATERAL AGREEMENT REGARDING CHARTERS.

4. EMBASSY THEN CALLED THE CHIEF OF THE TRANSPORT DIVISION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO INFORM HIM OF THE CASE AND TO IMPRESS UPON HIM THE SERIOUSNESS OF A SITUATION IN WHICH ONE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL IS ABLE TO MAKE ARBITRARY DECISIONS AFFECTING NOT ONLY THE OPERATIONS OF A DESIGNATED CARRIER, BUT ALSO THE EXPORT EFFORTS OF A VENEZUELAN COMPANY. EMBASSY FURTHERMORE SUGGESTED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY INITIATE TALKS WITH THE DIRECTOR OF AIR TRANSPORT IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH A POLICY OR A PROCEDURE WHICH FOREIGN AIRLINES CAN FOLLOW IN OBTAINING CHARTER CLEARANCES. MINISTRY OFFICIAL WAS FURTHER INFORMED OF U.S. VIEWPOINT REGARDING FREE COMPETITION. HE REPLIED THAT THIS WAS ALSO GOV "OFFICIAL" POLICY AND PROMISED TO DISCUSS WITH DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION.
SHLAUDEMAM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL AVIATION, SUPPLEMENTAL AIRLINES, AIR ROUTES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CARACA06360
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750216-0192
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750627/aaaaayhb.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VENEZUELAN REFUSAL TO AUTHORIZE CHARTER FLIGHTS
TAGS: EAIR, VE, US, PANAM, VIASA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006